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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

THE RÔLE OF WOMAN IN CERTAIN CHANSONS DE GESTE

Submitted by

Ruth Loyola Quinn

A. B., Boston University, 1920

In partial fulfilment of requirements for

the degree of Master of Arts

1928

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Chansons de geste
Women in literature and art
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The Role of Woman in Certain Chansons de Geste.

Introduction

The subject

The old French chansons de geste, more than a hundred of which have come down to us, give to the student a vivid picture of manners, customs, and modes of life of the people of France during the Middle Ages - that period of the world's history that seems more remote from us than even earlier times. Literally the term chanson de geste means a song of history or, more precisely, a song of valor, and is an epic poem, founded on some historical event and intended to be sung. These epics told the stories of popular heroes in a language everybody could understand. The tale was sure to be of battle; sometimes, as in the Chanson de Roland, it was the war of Christian against heathen; sometimes that of one of the great feudal lords against another, or against his king. They all, however, give us a picture of the life of mankind spent under rain and sun and in crude physical effort, at a period in history when the chief aim of man was both to deal good blows and to take them. These epics are valuable to us because of the study they present in the changes of the political, the social, the literary worlds of medieval times, and in the development of the French

Introduction

The subject

The old French chansons de geste, more than a hundred of which have come down to us, give to the student a vivid picture of manners, customs, and modes of life of the people of France during the Middle Ages. That period of the world's history that seems more remote from us than even earlier times. Literally the very chanson de geste means a song of history or, more precisely, a song of valor and is an epic poem, founded on some historical event and intended to be sung. These epics told the stories of popular heroes in a language everybody could understand. The tale was sure to be of interest; sometimes, as in the Chanson de Roland, it was the war of Christian against heathen; sometimes that of one of the great feudal lords against another, or against his king. They all, however, give us a picture of the life of warlike people under rain and sun and in crude physical effort, at a period in history when the chief aim of man was both to deal good blows and to take them. These epics are valuable to us because of the study they present in the changes of the political, the social, the literary world of medieval times, and in the development of the French

nationality, and they are fascinating because of their human interest, because of the men and women to whom they introduce us.

Choice of
subject

Of peculiar interest (to me) are the women that we meet in the chansons de geste. With their desires, motives, and actions they furnish the student with a subject as interesting, as diverting, as appealing to the imagination as the study of any heroines of contemporary life. As they pass in stately procession across the printed page, they become as real, as vividly alive as friends and acquaintances of our own world. They undergo the same temptations; they are moved by the same forces; they trust in the same Power; they endure similar sorrows; they are gladdened by the same joys that we experience.

In the early heroic poems, dealing wholly with warlike deeds and with battle, women had almost no place. The age was one of warfare; the basic principle of feudalism was military service. What position could woman occupy in a social system dependent upon force? In the earliest poems, then, she is introduced, if at all, as a mere incident because she had no place in purely heroic poetry - in poems devoted almost exclusively to the narration of warlike deeds. As we go on, however, the few references that we come upon in the poems of the

emotionally, and they are the emotional factors of
their poetic interest, because of the man and woman
to whom they introduce us.

Of particular interest (to us) are the women
themselves, and we find in the literature of the
last few years, and especially that written in the
last few years, a subject as interesting, as diverting, as
appealing to the imagination as the study of any
history of contemporary life. As they pass in
stately procession across the printed page, they be-
come as real, as vividly alive as friends and ac-
quaintances of our own world. They undergo the same
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they strive in the same power; they achieve similar
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eleventh century depict her as dignified, worthy of respect, and as possessing some authority. Gradually the scene of the story changes from the battlefield to the foyer and with this change in emphasis comes naturally an increasing prominence of women as characters important to the story. It was not until the twelfth century that woman became in literature an end in herself, a subject regarded as being "worthy of description and of detailed analysis".(1)

Justification of Plan

A more extended study of the subject than the present one would invite an attempt to trace the evolution of the woman-type by examining the chansons de geste in chronological order over a period covering more than two hundred years. It is well known that woman's status changed completely during that period. Her literary importance increases not only with the advance in her social rank but under the growing influence on the chansons de geste of two literary forms: the Celtic romances and the Provencal courtoise poetry. As time went on the center of interest shifted more and more from the married woman to the maid. Many of these poems felt the new influence of the romans d'aventure in the treatment of women. Adhering to the epic type and avoiding the domain of the romans d'aventure,

(1) Comfort, W. W. Types in the Chansons de Geste. Modern Language Association of America. Vol. XXI No.2. June 1906. p. 360.

nineteenth century, which has as its subject, poetry of
 womanhood, and as its author, a woman. Gradually
 the scene of the story changes from the medieval
 to the modern and with this change in emphasis comes
 naturally an increasing prominence of woman as a
 subject important to the story. It was not until
 the twentieth century that woman became in literature
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 the treatment of woman. According to the type
 and avoiding the details of the romance of chivalry.

(1) Journal of the American Association of Americanists, Vol. XII,
 No. 2, June 1908, p. 200.

the poets still contrived to bring the young woman into prominence and to develop her rôle. It has, however, been proven by those who have had opportunity to examine a very great number of the chansons de geste that the primitive feudal ideal of woman persists in these poems long after the change in her social position and after the two above mentioned literary influences had had time to exert themselves in Northern France.

We shall therefore, in a paper of this limited scope, abandon any attempt to trace the evolution of the woman-type as revealed by a chronological study of the chansons de geste but rather seek to define the character and rôle of a small, but representative, group of women, classifying them rather arbitrarily under four heads (while bearing in mind the fact that there is no hard and fast line): wife, mother, fiancée and daughter.

We have chosen a few interesting characters to illustrate each of the three types of wife that we meet in the chansons: the virile type, the gentle type, and the shrew. We shall then go on to study examples of the mother of warriors, the fiancée, and the daughter, as we come upon them in the following epics:

Aspremont, Girart de Roussillon, Raoul de Cambrai, Aliscans, Chancun de Willame, and Chanson de Roland.

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of the chansons de femme but rather seek to define the
character and rôle of a small, but representative,
group of women, illustrating their position and influ-
ence upon the French mind (while leaving to mind the fact that
there is no hard and fast line; wife, mother, fiancée
and daughter).

We have chosen a few interesting characters
to illustrate each of the three types of wife that we
meet in the chansons: the virtuous type, the gentle type,
and the strong. We shall then go on to study examples
of the mother of warriors, the fiancée, and the daughter.
For, as we come upon them in the following order:
Alexandre, Chansons de Willing, and Chansons de Roland.
Arthur, Elvira de Roussillon, Ronsard de la Roche,

General characteristics

Nowhere in French literature is woman portrayed more attractively and more truthfully than in the chansons de geste. The trouvères sought to express the truth about woman as they saw her and as they wished her to be. Keen observation and knowledge of the workings of woman's mind and heart are evident. These women whose characters we shall study have some characteristics noticeably in common. They are all young, no matter what age they may attain in the course of the poem. Regardless of other characteristics they are all beautiful.

As soon as the people began to hear about beautiful women, it became necessary to describe their outward features in detail. Gradually a slender fair-haired type was produced in French literature and became, once for all, the ideal of France, and this ideal has changed little since. They are all endowed with the quality we call charm. They all possess intelligence to a greater or less degree, and they are all interesting, both as products of the times in which they lived and in themselves.

Nowhere is French literature so woman-
tragedy more attractively and more profoundly than in
the Shadows of the Past. The Shadows of the Past is a
great work about women as they are and as
they wished her to be. It is observation and knowl-
edge of the workings of woman's mind and heart and
virtues. These women whose characters are so fully and
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A. Rôle of wife
1. Virile type
a) Guibourc

The devotion of wives to husbands is an essential feature of the early poems and of those which were later modelled directly upon them. The bond between husband and wife was very strong. We have no reason to doubt of a deep family affection. As wives the women are usually models of constancy, of love, and of self-sacrifice. Let us take for example Guibourc, the wife of Guillaume d'Orange.

La Prise d'Orange tells how Guillaume, the son of Aymeri, wooed and won the fair Saracen princess Arable who was destined to become his wife under the new name of Guibourc. In the poem Aliscans Guibourc appears in a less romantic guise as the childless wife of the hero of the Guillaume cycle.

When Vivien, nephew of Guillaume, sends to him for help against the pagans, Guillaume, wishing to prove Guibourc pretends to hesitate to leave her alone and go to the help of Vivien. She, however, does not hesitate but insists upon his going. Utterly vanquished, Guillaume returns home to witness a surprising scene. Guibourc, by means of messengers, has mobilized an army of thirty thousand men, fifteen thousand of whom are armed and ready to fight. She is entertaining the most important chiefs at a banquet. Here we see an exhibition of her initiative, capability, and masterfulness in the handling of the situation at Orange in the absence of her husband.

A. K. G. of wife
I. K. G. of wife
of Gulliver

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tween husband and wife was very strong. We have no
reason to doubt of a deep family affection. As
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love, and of self-sacrifice. Let us take for exam-
ple Gulliver, the wife of Gulliver's Travels.
In John Gulliver tells how Gulliver, the son of
Agamemnon, wooed and won the fair Helen of Troy.
Agamemnon who was destined to become his wife under the
new name of Gulliver. In the poem Agamemnon Gulliver
appears in a less romantic guise as the childless
wife of the hero of the Gulliver cycle.
When Helen, nephew of Gulliver, came to
him for help against the pirates, Gulliver, wishing
to prove Gulliver's goodness to his wife, he
alone and go to the help of Helen. She, however,
does not hesitate but insists upon his going. With-
out hesitation, Gulliver returns home to witness a
marriage scene. Gulliver, by means of his
has mobilized an army of thirty thousand men, fifteen
thousand of whom are armed and ready to fight. The
is undertaking the most important chiefs at a ban-
quet. Here we see an exhibition of her political
capability, and masterfulness in the handling of the
situation as Gulliver in the episode of her husband.

In the scene that follows Guillaume's return we observe that Guibourc, as she comforts her husband who laments over his defeat, possesses the womanly virtues of sympathy, loving kindness, and forgetfulness of self. Guillaume himself says of her,

"(Il) n'i out tel(e) femme en la crestiënté,
 Pur sun seignur servir e honorer,
 (Ne) pur eshalcer sainte crestiënté,
 Ne pur la lei maintenir e garder'." (1)

She fills Guillaume with new courage. In striking contrast to this scene, we are then given a picture of Guibourc, the warrior woman, when she speaks to the men that she has mobilized and promises them land and even wives if they will follow her husband to do battle at Archamp. She is so eminently successful in her plea that on the following morning Guillaume sets forth with all the thirty thousand men. We are given another insight into her sympathy for and understanding of human nature in the scene that follows her husband's departure. Guiot, the young nephew and heir of Guillaume, has been left behind to aid in guarding his uncle's palace. His grief is so great that Guibourc, who had refused to permit his going, finally yields, and Guiot joyfully follows his uncle.

Although Guillaume again suffers defeat, he and his nephew put the Saracens to flight, at least temporarily, and he returns home clothed in pagan arms.

(1) Tyler, Elizabeth Stearns.- La Chancun de Willame.
 p. 65.

In the scene which follows Gulliver's return to his
country, the Gulliver, as the countryman has named the
Jewelry over his defeat, possesses the country with
a sense of sympathy, feeling kindness, and forgiveness
of self. Gulliver himself says of her.

"(1) I am not a Jew, I am a Gulliver.
I am not a Jew, I am a Gulliver.
(2) I am not a Jew, I am a Gulliver.
I am not a Jew, I am a Gulliver."

The little Gulliver with her courage, in standing
against the Jews again, we are then given a picture
of Gulliver, the warrior woman, when she speaks to
the Jew that she has mobilized and promises them land
and even gives it they will follow her husband to the
battle at Achanah. She is an extremely successful
in her plan that on the following morning Gulliver
sets forth with all the thirty thousand men. We are
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derstanding of human nature in the scene that follows
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and heir of Gulliver, has been left behind to aid in
conducting his uncle's affairs. His chief is so great
that Gulliver, who had refused to permit his going,
finally yields, and Gulliver joyfully follows his uncle.
Although Gulliver again suffers defeat, he
and his nephew put the Jews to flight, as they
temporarily, and he returns home altered in power even.

The door-keeper, failing to recognize him, refuses him entrance and reports to Guibourc. We find this scene in both the Chancun de Willame and in Aliscans, but in the latter it is more embellished. Guibourc, also refusing entrance to the warrior who claims to be her husband, suggests that if he be really Guillaume he fight the Saracens who are passing in view of the walls of Orange. Guillaume, single-handed, rushes forth to do battle with the Saracens. When Guibourc witnesses his valor she also fears for his safety.* However, Guillaume gives her decisive proof of his identity by removing his helmet. She then admits him and hears the story of his struggles and defeat.

A charming scene between the couple follows. In the absence of servants Guibourc waits upon her husband with true wifely solicitude for his comfort. When he grieves and speaks of entering a hermitage and suggests that she become a nun, Guibourc's vigor, courage, and perseverance again come to the front. Regardless of continued defeat and discouragement, she prefers to wait, not to give in.

"'Sire', dist ele, 'co ferum nus assez,
Quant nus aurom nostre siecle mené!'" (1)

She advises that he go to King Louis to ask for help. When his reply is that he has no one to guard the

* This part of the story is differently related in the two sources.

(1) Tyler, Elizabeth Stearns.- Chancun de Willame.
p. 103.

palace, she promises to defend the city. Here is a further example of her vigor and determination, and here we have a striking example of a woman offering to put on armor and defend the castle.

"'Sire', dist ele, 'Ihesu e ses uertuz,
E set cenz damas que ai ça enz e plus.
As dos aurent les blancs halbercs uestuz,
E en lur chefz les uerz healmes aguz.
Si esterrunt as batailles la sus,
Lancerunt lances, peres, e pels aguz.
En petit d(e) hure serra ço trescorv.
Si Deus le uolt,(si) serrad (le) socurs uenv.'"(1)

Although we have more than one instance of the personal bravery of women in times of stress, it does not seem credible that under any condition the defense of a strong place should be left to women.⁽²⁾

However, the importance of the scene to us lies in the fact that the role of dignified heroism is assigned to a woman as the sharer in the undertakings and the dangers of her warrior husband.

The poet goes on to tell us that Guillaume, pursuing the advice of his wife, determines to go to King Louis to demand his aid. The parting between the two is affecting. One of the most natural touches is the portrayal of Guibourc's fear that her husband might be captivated by the charms of some Parisian beauty. She almost regrets giving him the advice to go to Paris. Guillaume comforts his wife

(1) Tyler, Elizabeth Stearns.- Chancun de Willame. p. 104.

(2) In Aliscans Guibourc does actually don her armor and is defending the castle against the Saracens when Guillaume returns from Paris with timely aid.

and, embracing her, promises:

"Ne ja ma bouce n'ert à autre adesée,
S'iert de la vostre basie et savorée
En cest palais dont la cors est pavée." (1)

At Paris when Guillaume asks help of the king, Louis says he is unable to grant it. Then the former becomes furious, throws his glove to the feet of the king, and addresses both the king and the queen with high words. Louis, relenting, promises help in spite of the queen's objections due to Guibourc's once having been a pagan. The king assembles a great army and they leave Paris. Guibourc's advice was well taken.

At the close of the chanson when we see the warriors taking final leave of Guillaume and Guibourc at Orange, we realize the affection of the entire host for them and we are impressed by the general regret. When we ourselves take leave of Guibourc, it is with admiration for her firmness, her courage, her ability, her strength of purpose and of character; but it is also with love of her because of her loyalty, her constancy, her gentleness, and her self-sacrifice. We sense that the very qualities that we look for in woman today - beauty, intelligence, companionship, love, loyalty - were held in just as high regard in medieval times.

(1) Guessard, M. F.- Aliscans. p. 60, 61.

and, according to the tradition

"There is no doubt that a great estate
is left to be made of the
the great estate is left to be made."

At Paris when Guillemet was king of the

king, Louis says he is unable to grant it. Then the

former business partner, Robert his friend to the king

of the king, and afterwards with the king and the queen

with high words. Louis, rejecting, Guillemet says in

words of the queen's objection due to Guillemet's case

which was a case. The king answered a great army

and they leave Paris. Guillemet's wife was still

alive.

At the close of the speech when we see the

warriors taking their leave of Guillemet and Guillemet

at length, we realize the attention of the entire

host for her and we are impressed by the general re-

spect. When we ourselves take leave of Guillemet, it

is with admiration for her firmness, her courage, her

activity, her strength of purpose and of character;

but it is also with love of her because of her loyalty,

her docility, her gentleness, and her self-respect.

We realize that the very qualities that we look for in

women today - beauty, intelligence, common-sense,

loyalty - were held in that as high regard in

medieval times.

A. Role of wife
 1. Virile type
 b) Emmeline

Guibourc, however, does not stand alone in these chansons as an example of a devoted wife who is also a masterful woman. The Chanson d'Aspremont offers us in the person of Emmeline another similar character who excites our admiration and respect. She may not possess the same appeal for us and she may not appear as warmly and vividly alive as the lovable Guibourc, but we must remember that the settings for their stories are dissimilar and that Emmeline is wedded to an entirely different type of man from the faithful and generous Guillaume. Emmeline is the daughter of the king of Hungary and the wife of Girart de Fraite of Vienna, a man who is as proud as he is ambitious and as weak as he is ambitious and proud. He believes that Charlemagne should recognize him as his overlord. Because Charlemagne has failed to do so, Girart hates him relentlessly and venomously. We shall see later on that, when reminded by his wife of his many transgressions, he yields to her entreaty only through his great fear of the punishment of God. Herein lies his weakness.

In the chanson we are given much of the direct conversation between Emmeline and her husband. Her language is so simple, so clear, so convincing that we receive a definite impression of her wisdom, her directness, and her firmness. When Emmeline hears that the pagan Agolant with his son Aumont and

1. Plot of wife
2. Plot of wife
3. Plot of wife
4. Plot of wife

Calderon, however, does not share this
these passages as an example of a devoted wife who is
also a masterful woman. The Chinese's appearance offers
us in the person of Fiammetta another similar character
who excites our admiration and respect. She may not
possess the same appeal for us and she may not appear
as warmly and vividly alive as the lovely Calderon,
but we must remember that the settings for their ap-
pearances are dissimilar and that Fiammetta is wedded to an
entirely different type of man from the faithful and
generous Calisto. Fiammetta is the daughter of
the king of Hungary and the wife of Albert de Rosta
of Vienna, a man who is as proud as he is ambitious
and as cold as he is ambitious and proud. He believes
that Fiammetta should recognize him as his over-
lord. Because Fiammetta has failed to do so, Albert
hates her passionately and venomously. We shall see
later on that, when reminded by his wife of his many
transgressions, he yields to her entreaty only through
his great fear of the punishment of God. Heretofore
his weakness.

In the passage we are given much of the di-
rect conversation between Fiammetta and her husband.
Her language is so simple, so clear, so convincing,
that we receive a definite impression of her wisdom,
her firmness, and her firmness. When Fiammetta
hears that the king is about to die, she is so

a large army is attacking the Christians under Charlemagne, she speaks most forcibly to Girart concerning the power of the king of France over him and the necessity of his going to the aid of the Christian forces. In this scene Girart wrathfully affirms that Charlemagne should rather pay homage to him. Emmeline does not fear to express her view of the case in the following forceful words:

"Sire Girart, que dis-tu là? interrompt dame Emmeline au fier visage. Le roi de France a pouvoir sur tous: tu sais qu'ainsi Dieu l'a voulu et décrété. Que fais-tu donc ici, pitoyable duc! Vraiment tu as, dans ta vie, commis tant de crimes, brûlé tant d'églises, mis tant de gens à honte et à mort que te voilà tout cousu de péchés mortels. Que ne pars-tu contre les Sarrasins pour obtenir pardon?" (1)

From the very beginning we realize the abundant fervor and religious faith she possesses. She attempts to impress upon Girart the enormity of his sins and his great need of expiation. We feel, as we read, that Emmeline has a deep and genuine love for Girart and that it is her loyalty and devotion that prompt her to urge him to join forces with Charlemagne.

When Girart insists upon raising an army with the intention of seizing France, Emmeline, moved by a sense of justice and of honor, insists in no uncertain terms that he will surely suffer the anger of God if he persists in his proposed warfare. She is absolutely fearless in her denunciation of wrong-

(1) Brandin, Louis.- Chanson d'Aspremont. p. 44.

a father who is watching the children under a
leaves, she cannot leave the house to visit
ing the power of the King of France over him and the
necessity of his going to the aid of the Christian
forces. In this sense there is nothing
that Charlemagne should rather pay homage to him.
Kameline does not feel he should pay him of the
use in the following words:

"Où il est, que il est, que il est, que il est
Kameline en son village. Le roi de France
pourrait en venir à son aide. Mais il
vaut se défendre. On ne peut pas aller
sans lui! ... Un moment, dans la
vie, Kameline sent le roi, dans son
sa sent le roi à son côté et il ne se
sent le roi à son côté. On ne peut
sans le roi à son côté." (1)

From the very beginning we realize the abundant fan-
cy and religious faith and piety. The attempt
to impress upon him the economy of his time and
his great need of explanation. We feel, as we read,
that Kameline has a deep and genuine love for him
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certain terms that he will surely suffer the anger of
God if he persists in his proposed warfare. She is
absolutely fearless in her denunciation of wrong-

doing; she enumerates his crimes; she ends with a plea that he go to the aid of Charlemagne in atonement for his sins.

"Vraiment, insiste dame Emmeline, puisse Dieu te maudire! Mauvais as-tu toujours été et mauvais veux-tu finir!..... Girart, franc paladin, souviens-toi donc comme tu as servi Dieu!.....Girart, mande tes hommes! Vole au secours de Charlemagne! Va t'en sur les païens expier tous tes crimes." (1)

All through her speech we know that she is thoroughly disinterested, that she is wise and sensible in her advice, and that she is eager to share in her husband's troubles, even though her beliefs render her unable to agree with him.

Emmeline is at last successful in moving Girart who grants what she demands. When leaving for the field of battle, he asks her pardon for any cause of anger that he may ever have given her, and at the end we learn that Girart appreciates his wife's devotion and self-sacrifice, for in speaking of her he admits that her knowledge surpassed his own. He says that if he has governed his land with glory and success it is because he followed her advice.

"Quand en ma jeunesse, il y a plus de cent ans, j'ai pris pour femme Emmeline la fille du roi de Hongrie, son savoir dépassait de beaucoup le mien. Si avec gloire et succès j'ai gouverné ma terre, c'est pour avoir suivi ses conseils." (2)

(1) Brandin, Louis.- Chanson d'Aspremont. p. 45.

(2) Ibid p. 203.

In common with Guibourc, Emmeline is a model of all wifely virtues in addition to being endowed with striking qualities of mind. The jongleur says of her:

"Or, seigneurs, faites silence et écoutez-moi bien: sa femme on doit l'aimer et la chérir: on doit suivre ses conseils quand elle est sage et avisée." (1)

A. Rôle of wife
 1. Virile type
 c) Elissent

The chanson of Girart de Roussillon presents to us still another noble woman who has characteristics that resemble to a marked degree those of Guibourc and Emmeline. Elissent, younger daughter of the emperor of Constantinople, also belongs to the virile and manly type of wife, who, through her intelligence and loyalty, exerts great influence over her husband. Although in the course of the poem we do not meet Elissent as frequently as we do her sister Berte, we nevertheless receive a very complete picture of her character and of her mind. When her father promises Charles, king of France, and Girart, one of the vassals of Charles, that if they will deliver the city of Rome from the hands of the Saracens, he will give them as a reward his two daughters, Berte and Elissent, we are given no hint as to the feelings of the daughters. We are told that the elder, Berte, will marry the king; and Elissent, the younger, is to marry Girart. After the conquest of Rome the king sends Girart with the Pope

(1) Brandin, Louis.- Chanson d'Aspremont. p. 44.

In person with Orleans, Kamelina is a model

of all wisely virtuous in addition to being endowed
with striking qualities of mind. The following says

of her:

"Or, saintement, l'âme saine et saine
et saine: ce n'est pas tout à fait
ou tout à fait saine et saine et saine
et saine." (1)

The character of Orléans de Roussillon was

A. Role of wife
Virtue
C. Roussillon

to us still another noble woman who has distinguished

her name to a marked degree those of Orleans and

Orléans. - Missions, younger daughter of the emperor

of Constantinople, also belongs to the virtue and nobility

type of wife, who through her intelligence and loyalty

exerts great influence over her husband. Although in

the course of the years we have met Orleans as the

queenly as we do her sister Marie, we nevertheless re-

ceive a very complete picture of her character and of

her mind. When her father promises Charles, King of

France, and Orleans, one of the vessels of Orleans,

that if they will deliver the city of Rome from the

hands of the Saracens, he will give them as a reward

his two daughters, Marie and Orleans, we are given

no hint as to the feelings of the daughters. We are

told that the sister, Marie, will marry the king; and

Orléans, the younger, is to marry Charles. After the

condemnation of Rome the king sends Orleans with the Pope

(1) Orléans, Louis - Roussillon de Roussillon, p. 44.

and a retinue to escort the two girls to him. Meanwhile we learn that the king has secretly determined to wed the fiancée of Girart. He tells the messengers from Girart, who acquaint him with the beauty of both, that he will take the better one.

Upon the arrival of Berte and Elissent we receive a definite impression of the contrast in the characters of the girls. While Berte, the elder and the fiancée of the king, becomes very frightened in his presence, Elissent, poised, at ease, and mistress of the situation, stands and bows deeply. Yet the poet, not wishing us to have the mistaken impression that Elissent is at all forward or bold, hastens to tell us that, as she bowed, she also blushed deeply. The king's evident pleasure in and preference for her, as shown by the fact that he at once sat down beside her rather than by his own fiancée, apparently did not in the least disturb her composure.

We next meet the calm and confident Elissent when we witness a scene between her and Girart. The king has insisted upon marrying the fiancée of his vassal, and the Pope and barons, in order to prevent possible war, have prevailed upon Girart to yield his claim to Elissent with the provision that Girart is no longer to remain a vassal of Charles. After the agreement has been reached, Girart is anxious to know what Elissent thinks of him as a result of his

and a feeling to assist the two girls in this. When
while we learn that the king has recently determined
we see the likeness of Grant. He tells the reason
came from Grant, who explained his with the beauty of
both, that he will take the better one.
Then the arrival of Berce and Elizabeth as
receive a definite impression of the contrast in the
characters of the girls. While Berce, the elder
and the likeness of the king, becomes very frightened
in his presence, Elizabeth, calm, so sure, and mis-
trust of the situation, stands and bows deeply. Yet
the poet, not wishing us to have the mistaken im-
pression that Elizabeth is as all forward or bold, has
made to call us back, as she loved, she also blushed
deeply. The king's evident pleasure in and prefer-
ence for her, as shown by the fact that he at once set
down beside her rather than by his own likeness, ap-
parently did not in the least diminish her composure.
We next meet the calm and confident Elizabeth
when we witness a scene between her and Grant. The
king has insisted upon marrying the likeness of his
versal, and the Pope and herons, in order to prevent
possible war, have prevailed upon Grant to yield his
claim to Elizabeth with the provision that Grant is
no longer to remain a vassal of Charles. After the
agreement has been reached, Grant is anxious to know
what Elizabeth thinks of him as a result of his

submission to the king. To him it appears to have been a miserable thing to do. But we sense from the words of Elissent that she feels only gratitude and affection for him as a result of his action. She says, "Vous m'avez faite reine, et ma soeur vous l'avez prise pour l'amour de moi." (1) She then presents him with a ring as a token of her love for him. The poet tells us that from this time on there always exists a pure love between Girart and Elissent. We feel sure that her masterful nature is much pleased by her elevation to such a position of power as she will enjoy as queen of France.

More than twenty-two years elapse before we meet Elissent again in the chanson. During that period the king, jealous and spiteful, covets Girart's beautiful castle at Roussillon, and, after a series of terrible battles, Girart defeated is practically driven from France. Through false rumors the people of France believe that Girart has died, but, after years of wandering and of poverty and hardship, he, at the instigation of his faithful wife, returns to France. Disguised as a pilgrim, he arrives at Orléans where the king and queen live. On the evening of Good Friday as the queen, Elissent, is praying before an altar, the pilgrim approaches her and says,

(1) Meyer, Paul.- Girart de Roussillon. p. 17.

admission to the king. To this it appears to have
been a miserable thing to do. But we know from the
words of Elizabeth that she feels only gratitude and
affection for him as a result of his action. She
says, "Vous m'avez fait reine, et je vous en
suis redevable tout mon royaume de moi." (I) She then
presents him with a ring as a token of her love for
him. The poet tells us that from this time on there
always exists a pure love between Girard and Elizabeth.
We feel sure that her motherly nature is much pleased
by her elevation to such a position of power as she
will enjoy as queen of France.
None then twenty-two years of age before we
meet Elizabeth again in the chapter. During that peri-
od of time, Girard and Elizabeth, cousin Girard's
beautiful castle at Roussillon, but, after a period
of terrible battles, Girard's father is successfully
driven from France. Through false rumors the peo-
ple of France believe that Girard has died, but, af-
ter years of wandering and of poverty and hardship,
he, as the result of his faithful wife, returns
to France. Disguised as a pilgrim, he arrives at
Orleans where the king and queen live. On the even-
ing of Good Friday as the queen, Elizabeth, is praying
before an altar, the pilgrim approaches her and says,

(1) Meyer, Paul. - History of Roussillon. p. 14.

"Dame, pour l'amour de Dieu qui fait miracles, et pour l'amour des saintes que vous avez requis, and pour l'amour de Girart qui te fut engagé, dame, je te crie merci pour que tu me viennes en aide!" (1)

The queen inquires immediately concerning Girart. When the pilgrim produces the ring that she had given Girart years before, she recognizes him.

From the scenes that follow we judge that Elissent's qualities of confidence, capability, cleverness and good management have grown stronger with the passing years. She watches over the safety of the pilgrim while she obtains his pardon from the king in a very skilful manner. Three days later on Easter Sunday she asks that Charles pardon Girart de Roussillon. Charles, believing Girart dead for years, grants him pardon, although reluctantly, before all his barons. Elissens displays her gratitude to her husband and immediately sends for the pilgrim and his wife. When the king recognizes them as Girart and Berte, he becomes furious and curses the pardon. However, the keen and resourceful Elissent wards off the dangers that beset her sister and her friend, Girart.

The wiles of a coquette are not unknown to the queen nor does she disdain to use them when they may be of service. Before approaching the king she retires to her rooms to don her most becoming gown.

(1) Meyer, Paul.- Girart de Roussillon. p. 248.

Thus fortified she is able to win her request from the king. She sees Berte and her husband restored to their castle at Rousillon, secures a pardon for Fouque, a relative of Girart, and, when the enmity between the king and Girart threatens to bring on war again, she effects a truce between the two opponents which is to last for seven years. Wherever we meet Elissent, we find her to be a woman of dignity, of courage, and of resourcefulness. We admire her loyalty to and kindness toward Girart and we respect her for her ability, her ingenuity, and her masterful handling of the situations she encounters.

A. Rôle of wife
 2. Gentle type
 a) Berte

With Elissent we have completed our study of the women who represent the strong and energetic type of wife as she appears here and there in the chansons included in the group we have chosen to consider. With her sister Berte we begin a survey of an entirely different type of wife, best characterized as "gentle", because gentleness seems to be her outstanding characteristic. We have already learned that Berte became timid and frightened in the presence of the king to whom she was betrothed. We are not to infer, however, that because Berte was gentle she was also without spirit. On the contrary when she learned that the king of France preferred to marry her sister rather than to marry her, she became angry and declared that she would sooner die than remain

Thus fortified she is able to win her request from the king. She sees her husband restored to their castle as her husband, secures a pardon for her, a relative of hers, and, when the enemy between the king and himself threatens to bring on war again, she effects a truce between the two opponents which is to last for seven years. However as with Elizabeth, we find her to be a woman of dignity, of courage, and of resourcefulness. We admire her loyalty to her husband toward himself and as we respect her for her ability, her ingenuity, and her masterful handling of the situations and encounters.

With Elizabeth we have completed our study of the women who represent the strong and energetic type of wife as she appears here and there in the characters included in the group we have chosen to analyze. With her sister Berthe we begin a survey of an entirely different type of wife, best characterized as "gentle". Because gentleness seems to be her outstanding characteristic. We have already learned that Berthe becomes timid and frightened in the presence of the king to whom she was betrothed. We are not so late, however, that because Berthe was gentle she was also without spirit. On the contrary when she learned that the king of France preferred to marry her sister rather than to marry her, she became angry and declared that she would sooner die than remain

A. Role of wife
B. Gentle type
C. Berthe

in such a humiliating position. The poet tells us that, after Girart married Berte, the more he knew her the better he appreciated her good qualities and the more completely he loved her. There is a satisfying quality of humanity about both Berte and her husband.

During all the years of Girart's prosperity, no mention is made of Berte, but when adversity overtakes him, when he is defeated, deserted, a fugitive and ill, then begins the real rôle of his wife Berte.

Driven from his burning castle by Charles, he is joined in exile by his wife. In their wanderings together we see the evidence of the untiring devotion of the gentle Berte. They are travelling through the forest of Ardenne when they come upon the home of an old hermit. Berte adds her entreaties to those of the hermit and succeeds in inducing Girart to give up all spite and hatreds, particularly hatred of Charles. To show his sincerity he says, to the great joy of Berte, that he pardons Charles for the love of God.

"Girart, dit-elle, pourquoi faites-vous si grande folie. Pardonnez toute rancune envers tout homme, et particulièrement envers Charles, votre roi empereur.- Dame, répond Girart, je le fais pour l'amour de Dieu." (1)

During the twenty-two years of penitence imposed upon him by the hermit, Girart finds his wife

(1) Meyer, Paul.- Girart de Roussillon. p. 238.

to be the uncomplaining sharer of his miseries. Broken in spirit and spent physically, he lets himself be guided in his wanderings by her. When they hear from merchants on their way that Charles has put a price on his head, Berte assumes direction of their affairs. She is frightened at the news and tells the merchants that Girart is dead, and that she has seen him buried. The poet makes the whole scene of their exile that follows vivid and natural. In Girart's sickness Berte cares for him. She is always a model of love, of constancy, and of self-sacrifice. When the poor Girart, rising from his sick bed realizes his misery and destitution, his wife is his only comforter, and despite all poverty and hardship she is always courageous.

"Sans sa femme il n'aurait pu supporter longtemps la vie: elle est sage, courtoise, et bonne; un prédicateur ne parle pas mieux: 'Sire, laisse les regrets, éloigne - les de toi. De tout temps tu as été orgueilleux, guerroyeur, batailleur et acharné pour tes intérêts. Tu as tué plus d'hommes que tu ne saurais le dire, et appauvri leurs héritiers et toute leur famille. Voilà que Dieu en prend justice, le vrai justicier. Souviens toi du prud'homme du bois de chênes qui t'a donné pour pénitence de souffrir le mal. Si tu la veux faire, un jour tu recouvreras ton fief!'" (1)

In the twenty-two years of their exile, they are both forced to do menial work, Girart as a street-porter, Berte as a seamstress. Finally, Girart, conscious of all the suffering Berte has

(1) Meyer, Paul.- Girart de Roussillon. p. 241.

undergone because of him, urges her to abandon him and go back to France. Her answer is characteristic:

"Ne plaise à Dieu le tout puissant que je vous abandonne en mon vivant! Certes, je saurais plutôt en feu ardent!" (1)

Berte reproaches him for even thinking of such a possibility but she does advise that they return to France and seek her sister, who, she feels sure, will find some means of saving Girart. He agrees and we know from what we have learned of Elissent that Berte was as good a counsellor as she was a loyal, unflinching, but gentle wife.

At the end of this long poem we learn that Berte, patient in all adversity (she has lost her children as well as endured the hardships through which we have followed her), the beloved chatelain, generous giver of alms and doer of deeds of mercy, is rewarded for her goodness by receiving the power to do miracles and is revered as a saint. (2)

A. Rôle of wife
 2. Gentle type
 b) Aalais

In our study of the gentle type of wife we shall next consider Aalais whom we met in two rôles in Raoul de Cambrai. Although we find mention of her first and most frequently in her rôle of mother, we are interested in her as the wife of Raoul Taillefer, Count of Cambrai, and sister of King Louis of France. Let us consider her as the wife first and leave our study of her as a mother until later.

(1) Meyer, Paul.- Girart de Roussillon. p. 246.

undergone because of him, when he is released his

and go back to France. Her answer is characteristic:

"Ma chère, si Dieu le veut, j'irai avec vous
vous attendre au port d'arrivée. Mais, je ne
pourrais pas en être sûre!" (1)

Beyre reproached him for even thinking of such a project.
Silently but with great calm she told him that when he returned to France
and back her sister, who, she felt sure, will find
some means of saving him. He agreed and we know
from what we have learned of Elizabeth that her
as good a counselor as she was a lover, unflinching,
his gentle wife.

At the end of this long poem we learn that
Beyre, perhaps in all sincerity (she has lost her child-
hood as well as endured the hardships through which we
have followed her), the beloved Elizabeth, generous
given of time and love of deeds of mercy, is rewarded
for her goodness by receiving the power to do more.
also and is rewarded as a saint.

In our study of the gentle type of wife we
shall next consider Elizabeth when we see in two roles
in Rene de Chateaubriand. Although we find mention of her
first and most frequently in her role of mother, we
are interested in her as the wife of Rene de Chateaubriand,
Count of Combaux, and sister of King Louis of France.
Let us consider her as the wife first and leave our
study of her as a mother until later.

Elizabeth de Chateaubriand
A. M. de Chateaubriand
Elizabeth de Chateaubriand

(1) Revue de France, 1900, p. 230.

Our first meeting with Aalais impresses us with the depth of feeling of which she is capable.

"La jantil dame Aalis au cler vis
Tel duel en fait si grans ne fu ois."(1)

Her husband Raoul has died before the birth of her son, whom she names for his father. Some time later the king, brother of Aalais, wishes to reward a count who has pleased him and decides that a fitting gift will be the hand of Aalais in marriage. Aalais refuses to accept a successor to her well-loved lord. "Dame Aalais n'ot pas le cuer frarin", (2) for refusal means that she and her son will be disinherited by the king. We shall find that wherever we meet Aalais she is on the side of the right. She prefers to endure the loss of her lands, she even dares refuse to obey the king rather than marry a man less worthy than her husband. She is not only noble and courageous, but also wise. We shall see much more of the charming Aalais when we meet her as the mother of Raoul, but we shall always find her satisfyingly human.

A. Rôle of wife
2. Gentle type
c) Béatrix

In the person of Béatrix, daughter of Guerri and later wife of Bernier, we have still another woman, whom we aim to study in two closely related roles, as the fiancée and as the wife. Béatrix is not an especially lovable or appealing figure at any time, but

(1) Meyer and Longnon.- Raoul de Cambrai. p. 2.

(2) Ibid p. 3.

and these meetings with Aileen expressed as

with the sense of feeling of which she is capable.

"The family were Aileen's only friends
and I feel as if I must be of use to them."

Her husband, Harold, was dead before the birth of her son.

who she named for his father. Some time later the

child, Thomas of Aileen, began to reveal a talent which

was pleased him and Aileen that a fitting gift will

be the hand of Aileen in marriage. Aileen's relation to

became a possession to her self-loved child. "I have

Aileen's of her is only feeling" (2) for Thomas's woman

and she and her son will be distinguished by this thing.

We shall find that whatever we need Aileen she is an

the side of the right. The problem is to make the fact

of her family, the even though refused to obey the king

because there every a man lost worthy than her husband.

She is not only noble and courageous, but also wise.

We shall see much more of the charming Aileen when we

meet her on the morning of Harold's death. But we shall always

find her artistically human.

In the person of Basilix, daughter of General

and later wife of Basilix, we have still another woman,

when we are to study in her strongly related voice, as

the finest and as the wife. Basilix is not an ex-

ceptionally lovely or appealing figure at any time, but

(1) Harold and Aileen. - Harold de Aileen, p. 2.

(2) Ida, p. 2.

a. Role of wife
2. Basilix's
3. Basilix

there is no doubt that even the modern reader will find her more attractive as the wife.

We find the story of Béatrix in the second part of Raoul de Cambrai, a poem which offers a striking example of the grafting on to the old epic of a new style. It is a poem that has felt the force of the new literary demands of the times for a new sort of woman,- a heroine who shall occupy in the narrative a place equal, if not superior, in importance to that of the hero. The poet, keeping to the epic, has still contrived to bring the young woman into prominence and to develop her rôle. We shall leave the study of Béatrix, the fiancée, until later and shall regard her first as a wife.

The poet gives us no reason to doubt the love of Béatrix for her husband Bernier. When immediately after her marriage the king attacks the bridal party on its way to Saint Quentin, Béatrix is taken prisoner but Bernier escapes. At Paris, to which city the prisoners are taken, the king tells Béatrix that she is to marry a great duke named Erchembaut de Pont, she refuses on the grounds that she is already married. Béatrix is never lacking in boldness, so we are not surprised at the firmness and temerity of the words in which she speaks her refusal; nor are we surprised that she succeeds in infuriating the king. But for the protection of the queen, she would have been turned

there is no doubt that even the most ardent will

find her more attractive as the wife.

So that the story of Beatrix in the second

part of Beatrix's is Beatrix's. A good which offers a different

the example of the greatest in the old world.

and so on. It is a poem which has the force of

the one literary work of the time for a new world.

of women, - a heroine who shall occupy in the narrative

a place equal, if not superior, to Jane Eyre.

of the hero. The poet, keeping to the rule, has still

insisted on giving the young woman into marriage and

to make her wife. We shall leave the study of

Beatrix, the heroine, until later and shall repeat our

study as a wife.

The poet gives us no reason to doubt the love

of Beatrix for her husband. When immediately

after her marriage the king attacks the bridal party

on the way to Saint Quentin, Beatrix is taken prisoner

and Beatrix escapes. At Paris, to which city the

prisoner is taken, the king tells Beatrix that she

is to marry a good man named Eustache Yvon.

But Beatrix on the grounds that she is already married.

Beatrix is never lacking in politeness, so we are not

surprised at the kindness and courtesy of the words in

which she speaks her refusal; nor are we surprised that

she succeeds in frustrating the king. But for the

position of the queen, she would have been married

over to the king's squires.

Two years later Bernier and Béatrix, while on a pilgrimage to Saint-Gillis, are attacked by pagans. Bernier is taken prisoner, and their baby son disappears. The king receives word that Bernier has been killed, so he arranges with Guerri to force Béatrix into a marriage pleasing to him. At this we are tempted to wonder how one of the earlier heroines of the chansons would have behaved in such a situation. Béatrix, however, submits to the marriage.

Later when Bernier escapes from prison and learns of the fate of his son and of his wife, he determines to rescue her, but first to test her love. Disguised, he learns that Beatrix has remained faithful to him and so he carries her home.

Some years later Bernier finds his first son whom they had lost on the pilgrimage. From the words of advice of Béatrix to her two sons concerning their future conduct we realize that she is very wise.

"Anfant, dist elle, molt vous devés amer,
Et vostre pere servir et honorer;
Le roi de France a vo pooir garder,
Car contre cel ne puet nus hons aler." (1)

Another proof of her wisdom is to be found in her warning to Bernier about a proposed pilgrimage with her father Guerri. Against her advice they leave, and, when Bernier stops on the way at the place where he had killed Raoul de Cambrai to regret the deed,

(1) Meyer et Longnon.- Raoul de Cambrai. p. 278.

over to the king's apartment.

Two years later Bernier and his wife

in a village in the hills, were obliged to go

down. Bernier is taken prisoner, and his wife and

children. The king receives word that Bernier has

been killed, so he exchanges with Bernier to form

Bernier into a service pleasing to him. At this

we are brought to wonder how one of the earlier

lines of the romance would have behaved to such a

alteration. Bernier, however, submits to the marriage.

Later when Bernier escapes from prison and

learns of the fate of his son and of his wife, he de-

termines to rescue her, and thus to save her love.

Meanwhile, he learns that Bernier has been killed

and to him and to his service her home.

Two years later Bernier finds his trust and

when they had lost on the marriage. From the words

of which of Bernier to her and none concerning Bernier

there is no doubt as to the fact that she is very wise.

"Bernier, that she, with your father's name,

is a woman who never is deceived;

is not the French a very good mother,

and Bernier and his wife have been wise." (1)

Another proof of her wisdom is to be found in her

warning to Bernier about a proposed marriage with

her father's cousin. Against her advice they leave,

and Bernier escapes on the way at the place where

he had killed Bernier de Combray to rescue the dead.

(1) Letter of Bernier to Bernier de Combray, p. 100.

Guerri in turn kills him. The dying Bernier realizes the wisdom of his wife's warning. Although we do not admire Béatrix particularly, we must admit that she is a true, loyal, and gentle wife to Bernier whom she loved.

A. Rôle of wife
 2. Gentle type
 d) Bramimonde

We shall turn to the Chanson de Roland for the last character in our survey of the gentle type of wife in medieval literature. Bramimonde, wife of the Saracen king Marsile, first appears when the pact between Marsile and the traitor Ganelon is sealed by the giving of beautiful presents to Ganelon. Bramimonde asks him to accept two bracelets for his wife. The scene possesses undoubted charm for us, because we have here, in contrast to the severe and formal demeanor of the warriors, a gentle, feminine touch which leaves with us a very pleasing impression.

When Marsile returns home after the battle of Roncesvalles where he lost his right hand in action, Bramimonde acts in a most natural fashion. "Voici devant lui sa femme Bramimonde qui pleure et crie et se désole amèrement." (1) She weeps, deplores the fate of the Saracens, and reviles their gods. Later we find her up in the tower with some of the clergy, watching the battle, and waiting for the result of the final engagement. When she announces it to Marsile, he turns toward the wall, conceals his face, weeps, and

(1) Geddes, James.- La Chanson de Roland. p. 107.

then dies of grief. Bramimonde then delivers the city up to Charlemagne. She is taken captive but not harmed. We know that Charlemagne is pleasantly impressed with her, and at the close of the chanson, when he speaks of her as a prisoner of noble birth desiring baptism, he orders the ceremony performed by bishops. That, after the Saracen defeat, Bramimonde should lose confidence in the Saracen gods and desire to be converted to Christianity, is to be expected. She is an interesting and important character in that she shows us in a measure the sacred character of the family and gives us a glimpse of the social status of the well-bred woman of the eleventh century who is a good wife and mother.

A. Rôle of wife
3. The shrew
a) Auféliste

Our next classification brings us to the shrew - the least attractive type of wife with whom we have to deal. In the Chanson d'Aspremont we find Auféliste, wife of Agolant, a Saracen woman who is as disloyal, as unfaithful, as unprincipled as she is beautiful.

When Naime, a messenger of Charlemagne, comes to Agolant to discover why he is putting the Frankish kings to death, Auféliste meets the messenger, immediately admires his beauty, and then prays to Mohammed to give her Naime for a husband in place of the aged and decrepit Agolant. She inquires of Naime as to whether he has a wife at home, and at the same time

she lets him see how greatly she admires his youthful appearance. She shows great pleasure when she learns that he is unmarried and then gives him a ring that has magic power as a token of her friendship. She freely tells him that she loves him and hopes that her love will be returned.

On the next occasion that we meet Aufé^lise she has been baptized by the Pope and has taken the name of Clarence. Secure in the belief that she is the most beautiful of the Saracen women, she asks Charlemagne to find a Christian husband worthy of her. When Naime assists her from her saddle, they recognize each other and then he tells her that he must marry the woman that Charlemagne, his king, chooses. We also learn that Girart considers Aufé^lise the most beautiful and wisest woman in either the Occident or the Orient and that he is anxious to have her marry Florent, the brother of Emmeline. When the marriage does take place, we realize that, although Aufé^lise may be beautiful and wise to a certain degree, she is thoughtless and unfaithful, in addition to being an unnatural, gay and disloyal wife.

A. Role of wife

3. The shrew

b) Blanche^fleur

The temptation comes at this point to pass lightly over the unpleasant picture presented by this type of shrewish and unfaithful wife, but we must linger to consider briefly one more example in the person of Blanche^fleur, the wife of King Louis, whom we meet

the fact that he has greatly enjoyed his youth-
ful experiences. The above words picture him as
feeling that he is somewhat and then gives him a sign
that his wife is a token of her friendship.
She freely tells him that she loves him and knows that
her love will be returned.

On the next occasion that we met together
she has been surprised by the fact and has taken the
name of Christiana. George is the belief that she is
the most beautiful of the women women, and when
Christianity is told a Christian husband worthy of her.
When Miss Weston has been her mother, they recognize
each other and then he tells her that he will marry
the woman that Christianity, his King chooses. We
also learn that Miss Weston's father the wife
beautiful and elegant woman is either the daughter or
the only one that he is anxious to have her marry
pleasant, the brother of Rebecca. When the marriage
does take place, we realize that, although Annie
may be beautiful and also to a certain degree, she is
thoughtless and unselfish, in addition to being an
unnatural, gay and playful wife.

The temptation comes at this point to pass
lightly over the unpleasant picture presented by this
type of thoughtless and unselfish wife, but we must in-
stead consider briefly one more example in the person
of Elizabeth, the wife of King Louis, whom we meet

Wife of King
Louis
Elizabeth

in the Aliscans and in the Chancun de Willame. We find her to be in appearance a slender, fair-haired beauty; in character a mean, jealous and cowardly woman. Wherever she is interested she uses her influence to gain the desired ends. That she is heartless and uncharitable is shown by her remarks when she hears of the murder of the sons of the traitor Fromont. We know that she urged the king to refuse to aid his faithful Guillaume on the grounds that Guibourc, having once been a Saracen and a pagan, might not be loyal. Her meanness and jealousy undoubtedly influenced her advice which, however, failed of its purpose.

B. The mother
a) Aalais

When we leave Blanchefleur to take up our study of woman as the mother in medieval times, we find two charming and striking examples - the very human Aalais and the truly regal Ermengart. We have already met and thoroughly admired Aalais as the loyal and courageous wife who honored the memory of her dead husband. She appears as counsellor in feudal matters in the Chanson Raoul de Cambrai. It is interesting to note that her right to give advice is unquestioned because it is through her fiefs as sister of the king that Raoul is one of the great vassals. We have learned that Aalais brought up her son practically in exile at the home of his uncle Guerri, Count of Arras.

When the boy becomes of age to be knighted and he and his uncle demand the return of Raoul's land,

in the Atlantic and in the Channel Islands.

And that is the appearance of a slender, fair-haired

beauty; in character a queen, jealous and cowardly

woman. However she is interested and uses her in-

fluence to gain the desired ends. That she is heart-

less and unscrupulous is shown by her remarks when she

hears of the murder of the sons of the earlier monarch.

We know that she urged the king to refuse to aid his

fateful Gallians on the grounds that Gallians, having

once been a barbarian and a pagan, might not be loyal.

Her reasoning and jealousy undoubtedly influenced her

advice which, however, failed of its purpose.

When we leave Blancheval to take up our

study of women as the author in medieval times, we find

two charming and striking examples - the very human

Isabel and the truly regal Margaret. We have already

met and thoroughly admired Isabel as the loyal and

conspicuous wife who honored the memory of her dead hus-

band. She appears as conspicuous in feudal matters

in the Chronicle of the Kings of Castile. It is interesting

to note that her right to give advice is unquestioned

because it is through her life as vicar of the king

that Isabel is one of the great women. We have

learned that Isabel brought us far and successfully in

all at the home of his uncle, Count of Artois.

Then the boy became of age to be knighted

and he and his uncle shared the return of Isabel's land.

2. The mother
of Isabel

the king refuses but promises the first domain that becomes vacant. A year later, at the death of Count Herbert de Vermandois, Raoul and Guerri demand Herbert's land. The king tells him to fight for it. Aalais, hearing of Raoul's plan protests vehemently against it. As always she is on the side of right. She begs him not to take the land from the four orphan sons of Herbert. She reminds him that his father and the count were fast friends.

"Laisse lor terre, por amor, Dieu t'en pri.
R tes peres, cil qui t'engenui,
Et quens H. furent tos jors ami." (1)

We see true psychology in her argument, for, when the moral reason fails to move Raoul, she gives him this practical one which is less important in her eyes but may have more weight with her son: namely, that the sons of Herbert are more powerful than he, that he will probably be killed, and that she will die of grief. She urges the possibility that, if he gives up this war, the sons of Herbert will be so grateful that they will aid him in regaining his own father's lands. We see here what an excellent counsellor Aalais is. We are almost shocked by the terms in which the reckless son rejects his mother's counsels.* This same note of brutality between men and women of the same family is

(1) Meyer et Longnon.- Raoul de Cambrai. p. 31.

* cf. Raoul de Cambrai. p. 35.

the King refused but promised the King's daughter that
his son would be a year later, at the death of his
father. The King's daughter, Rachel and Queen Elizabeth
and the King's daughter, Rachel and Queen Elizabeth
As always she is on the side of right. She says this
not to take the King from the King's son of
her father. She reminds him that his father and the
count were his friends.

"I have for years, not only, but for years,
I have for years, not only, but for years,
I have for years, not only, but for years." (1)

We see true psychology in her argument, for, when the
moral reason fails to move Rachel, she gives up this
practical one which is less important in her eyes but
may have more weight with her son: namely, that the
sons of Henry are more powerful than he, that he will
probably be killed, and that she will die of grief.
She urges the possibility that, if he gives up this
war, the sons of Henry will be so grateful that they
will give him in return the King's daughter. We
see here what an excellent counsellor Rachel is. We
are almost shocked by the cynicism in which the weakness
and rejection of her mother's counsel is. This sense of
possibility between men and women of the same family is

(1) Henry of Langton. - Rachel to Henry, p. 81.

* of Rachel to Henry, p. 82.

heard more than once in the older poems. That Aalais is just as hot-headed as her son may be seen from the very human outcome of the scene. She curses him and asks God not to allow him to return safely from the war.

"Et gant por moi ne le viex or laisier,
Cil Damerdiex qi tout a a jugier,
Ne t'en ramaint sain ne sauf ne entier!"(1)

Then, still more unhappy than before, she goes into a church and kneeling before the crucifix, asks God to bring Raoul home again safe and sound.

After Raoul leaves, Aalais dreams that she sees her son killed. Upon awaking she asks for news of him and learns that he has died at the hands of Bernier, once his companion-squire. When the dead boy is brought upon a shield and placed in a monastery, the grief of Aalais is very touching. With her natural sorrow at the loss of her son there is also the grief of the parent without an heir, which was a serious matter in feudal times. All through the long poem she is overcome by remorse for having cursed her son. Now she blames herself for his death. When we leave Aalais, she is pardoning Bernier because of his contrition and humility, and granting peace. Although she is hasty and hot-headed, Aalais is also noble, wise, and delightfully human.

(1) Meyer et Longnon.- Raoul de Cambrai. p 36.

heart more than once in the other years. That night
is just as hot-headed as her son may be seen from the
very human outcome of the scene. She turned him and
asks God not to allow him to return safely from the

war.

"It went not well as a view of father,
Gill Gamble of town a fugitive,
No 'an' present said he said he said (11)
"Then, still more unhappy than before, she goes into
a church and kneeling before the crucifix, asks God
to bring Heoul home again safe and sound.

After Heoul leaves, Amla's dream that she
meets her son killed. Upon waking she asks for news
of him and learns that he has died at the hands of
Bernier, once his companion-in-arms. When the dead
boy is brought upon a shield and placed in a monastery,
the grief of Amla is very touching. With her own
reluctance at the loss of her son there is also the
grief of the parent without an heir, which was a seri-
ous matter in feudal times. All through the long poem
she is overcome by remorse for having ousted her son.
Now she blames herself for his death. When he leaves
Amla, she is pardoning Bernier because of his car-
ricious and humbling, and creating peace. Although
she is hearty and hot-headed, Amla is also noble, wise,
and delightfully human.

B. The mother
b) Ermengart

In Aliscans there is to be found an interesting mother in the character of the regal and dignified Ermengart. The poet makes it clear to us that she is a very beautiful and noble woman. We meet her at the court of King Louis at Paris when her son Guillaume, acting upon the advice of his wife Guibourc, has come to demand aid from Louis. Ermengart strongly favors the cause of Guillaume. Although we receive the impression that she is a woman of mild temperament, we also realize that there is a great underlying strength in her character. When Louis is opposed to the demands of Guillaume and refuses aid, when even Aimeri is silent before the needs of his son, Ermengart courageously takes her stand and fearlessly reproaches her husband and the king, and she herself offers to take up the sword in defense of what she considers to be right.

"Par Dieu, Franchois, tout estes recréant.
 Aimeris sire, or te va cuers faillant!
 Biaus fiex Guillames, ne te va esmaiant,
 Car, par l'apostle que quirent penéant,
 Encor ai jo ~~je~~ .I. tresor si très grant.
 Ne le menroient .xx(x). car cariant;
 Tout le donrai, ja n'i lairai besant,
 As saudoiers ki s'iront combatant,
 Et je méismes i serai cevauchant,
 L'auberc vestu, lacié l'elme luisant,
 L'escu au col et au costé le brant,
 La lance el poing, el prumier cieff devant.
 Por ce se j'ai le poil cenu et blanc,
 S'ai je le cuer trestot lié et joiant,
 Et, se Dieu plaist, aiderai mon enfant,
 Car, par l'apostle ke quirent penéant,
 Puis ke armée serai sor l'auferrant,

In addition there is to be found an inter-

esting woman in the character of the royal and dis-

ting woman. The first woman is clear to us

that she is a very beautiful and noble woman. As

most has at the court of King Louis or Louis when her

son Guillaume, resting upon the advice of his wife

Guillemette, has come to demand his own lands.

Guillemette strongly favors the cause of Guillaume.

Although we receive the impression that she is a woman

of mild temperament, we also realize that there is

a great underlying strength in her character. When

Louis is opposed to the demands of Guillaume and not

she, when even Louis is silent before the needs of his

son, Guillemette courageously takes her stand and fear-

lessly reproaches her husband and the king, and she

herself offers to take up the sword in defense of what

she considers to be right.

"For this, Guillaume, good sister, repentant,
Almaida also, or to be more faithful,
Almaida like Guillaume, as to be consistent,
But, for I suppose you cannot consent,
Knew it to be I, I know of this great
He is married, (xix), my daughter;
What is done, in my mind I feel
is something of a great moment,
He is married I have consented,
I have seen, I have seen, I have seen,
I have seen and so on, so on, so on,
I have seen, of course, of course,
For to be I am not a girl, I am a woman,
I am not a girl, I am not a girl,
But, for I suppose you cannot consent,
But, for I suppose you cannot consent,
But, for I suppose you cannot consent."

N'i a païen, Sarrasin, ni Persant,
 (Se) le consieu de m'espée trenchant
 Ne le convigne chaoir de l'auferrant." (1)

Thus we meet in Ermengart a virile character who appears to us as the personification of that noble type of woman who is to be found in the chansons, the loyal, self-sacrificing wife and mother, the brave undaunted, intelligent, companion.

C. The fiancée
 1. The passionate type
 a) Aupais

From our study of woman as wife and mother we shall turn next to consider a few noteworthy examples of woman as the fiancée. Aupais, daughter of Duke Thierrî and niece of the king, is, like Béatrix, a very passionate young woman. When Count Fouque, taken prisoner after the defeat of Girart, is delivered up to her, there is no doubt that she intends making him undergo harsh treatment during his imprisonment. He has been the faithful ally of her father's worst enemy, and we expect her to punish him severely. Instead she falls passionately in love with him. She orders that the chains he wears as a prisoner be made of silver.

During his imprisonment (which must have lasted at least twenty-two years, since he is not released until after Girart's return from exile) she takes up her abode near his cell and administers to all his wants, comforting and encouraging him, and waiting patiently until the day of his release should make their marriage possible. In spite of the fact that his father was

(1) Guessard, M. F.- Aliscans. p. 82.

He is a person, however, of a different
(2) is a person of a different
No is a person of a different

There we meet in a person of a different

For the person to us as the personification of that
noble type of woman who is to be found in the person
the loyal, self-sacrificing wife and mother, the brave
unfailing, intelligent, companion.

From our study of woman as wife and mother

we shall turn next to consider a few noteworthy ex-

amples of woman as the friend. Lucretia, daughter of

the noble and wise of the king, is, like Lucretia,

a very passionate young person. When young people

are together, then the defect of Lucretia, is delivered

up to her, there is no doubt that she is taking him

undergo much trouble during his imprisonment.

has been the faithful ally of her father's worst enemy.

and we expect her to punish him severely. Instead she

feels passionately in love with him. She orders that

the chain be worn as a prisoner be made of silver.

During his imprisonment (which must have lasted

at least twenty-two years, since he is not released un-

til after Lucretia's return from exile) she keeps up her

those past his cell and administers to all his wants.

encouraging and encouraging him, and waiting patiently

until the day of his release should make their marriage

possible. In spite of the fact that his father was

The person
of a different
type of woman
who is to be
found in the
person

more than one hundred years old when he was killed and his death occurs five years before the capture of Fouque, when Aupais must have been a young woman, still we find that more than twenty-two years later she is young, attractive and beautiful. When Girart finally arrives at the prison to rescue Fouque it is on condition that, when released, he marry Aupais. He receives her as his bride at the hands of the queen.

C. The fiancée
 1. The passion-
 ate type
 b) Béatrix

We have met and considered Béatrix, daughter of Guerri, as a wife. Now we shall see her in a much less attractive light when she is seeking to become the fiancée of Bernier. We remember her as a wise but forward woman. We shall find the same characteristics in her youth, but we shall see her also as a schemer who stops at nothing to gain her ends. When Bernier arrives as a guest of her father, Béatrix is won by his beauty and his reputation for bravery before he even thinks of love. She takes the initiative and begins to conduct the wooing of Bernier. As the first step in her plan to capture him, she sends a messenger to bring Bernier to her boudoir, rehearses her charms, and asks him to take her for his wife. When he hesitates because of differences in birth and rank, she becomes angry at the possibility of refusal. Finally he decides to marry her provided only that her father be willing to accept him as a son-in-law.

more than one hundred years old when he was killed
 and his death occurred five years before the capture
 of London, when Richard had been a young woman,
 still so that she was now twenty-two years later
 she is young, attractive and beautiful. When Richard
 finally arrives at the prison to rescue Louisa it is
 on condition that, when released, he marry Louisa. He
 receives her as his bride at the hands of the queen.
 We have not yet considered Richard, however.
 of Richard, as a wife. Now we shall see her in a more
 from a different light when she is seeking to rescue
 the fiancée of Richard. We remember her as a wife and
 Louisa's woman. We shall find the same characteristics
 in her youth, but we shall see her also as a mother
 who stops at nothing to gain her ends. When Richard
 arrives as a guest at her father, Richard is now to his
 beauty and his reputation for bravery before he even
 thinks of love. She takes the initiative and begins to
 conduct the wooing of Richard. As the first step in
 her plan to seduce him, she sends a messenger to bring
 Richard to her father, between her father and her
 him to take her for his wife. When he hesitates be-
 cause of differences in birth and rank, she becomes an-
 gry at the possibility of refusal. Finally he decides
 to marry her provided only that her father be willing
 to accept him as a son-in-law.

1. The fiancée
 2. As a wife
 3. As a mother
 4. As a woman
 5. As a friend

Another indication of the character of Béatrix is given when the poet tells us that it is she, not Bernier as we might expect, who asks for and receives her father's consent. After their betrothal, while Bernier is engaged in warfare, Béatrix becoming impatient, sends messengers to him to ask why he does not come to marry her. This portrayal of Béatrix as the passionate fiancée of Bernier is found in the second part of Raoul de Cambrai which is quite clearly influenced by the later literary types. Her character is interesting to us merely because it points out the change from the primitive type and the elaborating of the rôle of woman in fiction.

C. The fiancée
 2. The faithful
 type
 a) Aude

It is refreshing to turn from Aupais and Béatrix to the unique figure of Aude, "une bele dame", whom we find introduced in the Chanson de Roland as an incidental personage who might have been omitted as far as the progress of the tale is concerned. She is the sister of Oliver and the fiancée of Roland, brothers-in-arms. She is not once named by the hero, Roland, but our first mention of her comes when Roland proposes to sound his horn to summons Charlemagne to his aid, and Oliver reproaches him thus:

"Par ceste meie barbe,
 Se puis veeir ma gente sorur Alde,
 Ne jerreiez ja mais entre sa brace!" (1)

(1) Bédier, Joseph.- La Chanson de Roland. p. 132.

Another illustration of the character of

Robert is given when the poet tells us that it is

she, not Robert, who is the object of the love for and

admiration for Robert's character. After this point

of view, while Robert is engaged in writing, Robert is

working incessantly, needs no encouragement to his work

and does not need to hurry him. This portrayal of

Robert as the passionate friend of Robert is found

in the second part of Robert as friend when it is said

clearly influenced by the latter literary type. Her

character is interpreted as an early woman is

shown and the change from the initial type and the

elaboration of the role of woman in fiction.

It is refreshing to turn from Anne and

Robert to the native figure of Anne, "one wife more"

when we find introduced in the Chambers of Robert as

an idealized portrait who might have been called

as far as the progress of the role is concerned. The

is the sister of Oliver and the friend of Robert.

Robert is not once named by the name.

Robert, but the first mention of her comes when Robert

proposes to marry his own to someone else.

His girl, and Oliver reproaches him with:

"You have sold her."

"To what? To a man who is not even alive."

"He is dead, he is dead, he is dead!" (1)

We find no further mention of her until Charlemagne returns to Aix with the sad news of Roland's death. When Aude inquires for Roland, the king replies that he is dead and tells her that she will marry his son Louis instead. Aude, expressing her faithfulness to Roland and her desire not to survive him, falls fainting at the emperor's feet. When he stoops to lift her up, she is dead. He calls four countesses who bear her body away. Aude has fulfilled her mission in dying for love of Roland. This rapid sketch of Aude gains in impressiveness by its very simplicity, and there are several interesting facts to note at this point. First, we have no description of her charms; she is merely styled, "une bele dame". Second, she aspires to be the equal of the man she loves. Third, she has the right and independence to refuse a substitute for Roland. He cannot be replaced in her broken heart. Because she is the type of fidelity, a loyal unmarried woman who is faithful unto death, she has nothing to do but die. When Aude falls lifeless the French warriors mourn for her, but they express no surprise. Faithfulness such as hers is expected not only in the wife, but in the betrothed maiden.

We find no further mention of her until

Charlemagne returns to Aix with the sad news of

Roland's death. When Aude learns of Roland, she

finds nothing that he is dead and tells her that she

will marry his son Louis instead. Aude, expressing

her faithfulness to Roland and her desire not to sur-

vive him, tells Charlemagne at the emperor's feet. When

he stoops to lift her up, she is dead. He calls

for countesses who bear her body away. Aude has

fulfilled her mission in dying for love of Roland.

This rapid sketch of Aude's life is interesting in

its very simplicity, and there are several interest-

ing facts to note at this point. First, we have no

description of her person; she is merely styled,

"the fair dame". Second, she appears to be the equal

of the men she loves. Third, she has the right and

independence to refuse a substitute for Roland. He

cannot be replaced in her broken heart. Because she

is the type of fidelity, a loyal unmarried woman who

is faithful unto death, she has nothing to do but die.

When Aude tells Charlemagne and French warriors mourn

for her, but they express no surprise. Faithfulness

such as hers is expected not only in the wife, but in

the betrothed maiden.

C. The fiancée
 2. The faithful type
 b) Hélouis

In the chanson Raoul de Cambrai, Hélouis, fiancée of the hero Raoul, is also introduced as a mere incident, of slight or no importance in the development of the action of the poem. The poet tells us that she is one of the most beautiful maidens in the world. As soon as she hears the news of her lover's death she hastens to the scene. We find that her grief is more touching and appealing than even that of Raoul's mother Aalais. We are given more of the details than in the case of the unhappy and pathetic Aude. We see proof of the love and constancy of Hélouis when she praises the work and the life of Raoul. She asks to have his helmet removed so that she may kiss his face and promises never to entertain the thought of marriage with any other man. She tells the mother Aalais to go find rest while she alone watches over the body of Raoul. We have here a picture of the sincerity, the loyalty, the devotion of the intelligent Hélouis in her inconsolable grief. The poet is skilful in his artistic treatment, for he draws the bare outline and suggests enough so that our imagination may fill in the details. He gives us a sympathetic view of the natural grief of a lover. When all is over, Hélouis again says that she will give up every thought of feudal alliance and social prestige, will never take any lord for a husband, and will thus remain true to the memory of Raoul.

D. The daughter
1. Aelis

The Chancun de Willame and Aliscans give us another interesting maiden, Aelis, the beautiful and charming daughter of King Louis.

"La rose samble en mai la matinée;
 Ele est plus blanche ke (n'est) noif sor gelée,
 Et de color ensi bien luminée
 K'en toute France, ki tant est longe et lée,
 Nule tant bele ne puet estre trovée. (1)

She is eighteen years old when we encounter her for the first time. In the scene between Guillaume and Louis after the king has refused aid, Blanchefleur, mother of Aelis, does not dare return to the council room. Of all the warriors assembled there, not one dares approach the infuriated Guillaume. Aelis, who, though modest, is brave and firm in her determination, does not fear to address Guillaume and even refuses to withdraw until he grants her request that he become reconciled with her father and mother.

"Rise", commands Guillaume after she has made her request.

"Non ferai, oncles; miex vuel estre enfouie
 Ke je me lieve dusqe m'ert otroïe
 Li acordance, et vostre ire apaïe." (2)

She offers her very life in exchange for Guillaume's forgiveness of her parents. It is little wonder that Guillaume is touched by her goodness and beauty.

Later in the poem we learn that Aelis marries Rainouart, brother of Guibourc. He had been first a

(1) Guessard, M. F. - Aliscans. p. 86

(2) Guessard et Montaiglon.- Aliscans. p. 89

kitchen-knave, then a follower of Guillaume, later a knight, and finally his social uplift is completed when he is married to the lovely daughter of the king.

Conclusion

The study of the woman depicted in the *Chansons de Geste* which we have surveyed has led us to the conclusion that she is superior to man intellectually. Every crisis is met by the judgment of a woman; every decision of moment is made by her. By her intelligence she is enabled to see the situation as it is and to weigh the circumstances. By her heart she possesses another sense, intuition. Penetrated by Christian virtues, she is noble in her actions and charitable and just in her judgments. She is the instrument of peace and justice.

Her influence on the actions of men - and thus on the events of the story - comes from her quality of counsellor. We have allowed the characters themselves to present the evidence and they have thrown an interesting light on the spirit of the poems in regard to womanhood.

In the earliest epic poems we have found the women mentioned to be mere incidents scarcely worthy of notice in the career of the hero. Love is entirely undemonstrative and is relegated to the background. The hero is a fighting man, and the whole spirit of the poem is warlike. In the later poems however we have found her rôle to be as important as that of the men. Without the physical strength of the soldier, she

however possesses all his courage, determination and fortitude. In addition to these qualities she exceeds him in patience, justice, cleverness and judgment.

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for the most part unknown, we have given the liberty
of displaying this part of the bibliography by al-
phabetical order of titles.

28.
how far passed all his course, determination and
-in addition to these qualities are ex-
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